

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 12218

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, UK, ZA, RH, BC, TZ, SF

SUBJECT: BRITISH, TANZANIAN, ZAMBIAN AND BOTSWANAN WORK-
ING-LEVEL DISCUSSIONS ON SOUTHERN AFRICA

1. SUMMARY. ACCORDING TO DEPARTMENT HEAD AT FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE, BRITISH GOVERNMENT CONTINUED ITS CURRENT DIALOGUE ON SOUTHERN AFRICA EARLIER THIS WEEK VIA MEETING BETWEEN WORKING-LEVEL OFFICIALS FROM FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE AND REPRESENTATIVES FROM ZAMBIA, BOTSWANA AND TANZANIA, AS WELL AS DURING MEETING BETWEEN FOREIGN SECRETARY CALLAGHAN AND ZAMBIAN FOREIGN MINISTER MWAANGA (REFTEL). MAIN ITEM DISCUSSED WAS RHODESIA. AFRICANS URGED BRITISH TO ENCOURAGE SOUTH AFRICANS TO TWIST IAN SMITH'S ARM, BUT BRITISH BELIEVE THEY UNDERSTOOD WHY HMG HAD LITTLE LEVERAGE WITH SAG AT THIS TIME. MEETING WAS INTENDED TO PROVIDE PLATFORM FOR EXCHANGE OF
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INFORMATION AND VIEWS AND NO DECISIONS WERE REACHED.

END SUMMARY.

2. AS PART OF EXPANDING DIALOGUE, BRITISH WORKING-LEVEL OFFICIALS AT FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE MET EARLIER THIS WEEK WITH REPRESENTATIVES FROM ZAMBIA, BOTSWANA AND TANZANIA TO DISCUSS SOUTHERN AFRICA. BRITISH WERE REPRESENTED BY DEPARTMENT HEADS FROM FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE, ZAMBIA BY MARK CHONA, MANDA (FNU) FROM FOREIGN OFFICE, AND ZAMBIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER NGONDA, BOTSWANA BY ACTING HIGH COMMISSIONER LONDON AND MAGWE (FNU) FROM GABORONE, TANZANIA BY HIGH COMMISSIONER LONDON, AMON JAMES NSEKELA. PURPOSE OF MEETING WAS TO EXCHANGE INFORMATION AND VIEWS, AND ACCORDING TO HEAD RHODESIAN DEPARTMENT AT FOREIGN OFFICE, BYATT, THERE WAS NO INTENTION ON ANYONE'S PART TO DECIDE ON COMMON COURSES OF ACTION AT THIS TIME. MAIN SUBJECT OF TALKS WAS RHODESIA.

3. AFRICANS TOLD BRITISH THAT THEIR NUMBER ONE PRIORITY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AT THIS TIME IS TO PERSUADE SOUTH AFRICA TO ADOPT A HANDS-OFF POLICY SIMILAR TO THE POLICY THEY HAVE MANIFESTED TOWARD MOZAMBIQUE. IN PARTICULAR, THE AFRICANS WOULD LIKE THE SOUTH AFRICANS TO WITHDRAW THEIR FORCES FROM RHODESIA AND ENFORCE UN SANCTIONS. BYATT TOLD EMBOFF IN CONFIDENCE THAT SOUTH AFRICANS HAD DISCUSSED RHODESIA WITH BRITISH ABOUT TWO WEEKS AGO. BRITISH, HOWEVER, DID NOT URGE THEM TO TWIST IAN SMITH'S ARM FOR SAME REASONS THEY GAVE TO THEIR AFRICAN INTERLOCUTORS, NAMELY THAT PRESENT LABOR GOVERNMENT HAD TAKEN SEVERAL DECISIONS SINCE COMING TO POWER THAT DID NOT PUT BRITISH IN SOUTH AFRICA'S GOOD BOOKS AND BRITISH BELIEVE, THEREFORE, THEY HAVE VERY LITTLE LEVERAGE WITH THE SOUTH AFRICANS. MOREOVER, WITH ELECTIONS COMING UP, UK GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO TAKE ANY DECISIVE ACTION. BYATT COMMENTED THAT AFRICANS FELT DEVELOPMENTS IN MOZAMBIQUE WOULD HAVE SPEEDY IMPACT IN RHODESIA LEADING TO POSSIBLE CHANGES BY EARLY 1975. BYATT SAID THAT BRITISH FELT THEY HAD CONVINCED AFRICANS THAT IT IS MORE LIKELY TO TAKE LONGER TIME. BRITISH THINKING IS THAT EFFECT WILL BE MAINLY PSYCHOLOGICAL, MAKING WHITES MORE CONFIDENTIAL

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APPREHENSIVE AND GIVING BLACKS GREATER ASSURANCE. IN CONFIDENCE, BYATT ALSO SAID THAT BRITISH HAVE NOT YET HAD FROM ANY SOURCE AN ASSESSMENT OF EFFECT ON SMITH AND HIS GOVERNMENT OF DEVELOPMENTS IN MOZAMBIQUE. (IN SEPARATE CONVERSATION WITH CONSERVATIVE PARTY OFFICIAL, EMB-OFF INFORMED IN STRICTEST CONFIDENCE THAT FORMER FOREIGN SECRETARY, SIR ALEC DOUGLAS-HOME, HAD RECEIVED THIS WEEK A LETTER FROM IAN SMITH IN

WHICH SMITH SAID THAT PEOPLE WERE MISINTERPRETING EFFECT OF MOZAMBIQUE SITUATION ON RHODESIAN REGIME, BELIEVING IT WOULD INDUCE SMITH TO REACH AGREEMENT WITH BLACKS, BUT THAT SMITH WOULD BE MORE UNYIELDING THAN EVER AFTER WHAT HAS HAPPENED IN MOZAMBIQUE.) FINALLY, BYATT ALSO SAID THAT BRITISH FELT OPPORTUNITY FOR SMITH TO ENGAGE IN SECRET NEGOTIATIONS WITH ANC LEADERS HAD NOW PASSED. IN ANY FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS, ZANU AND ZAPU WOULD PLAY MORE PROMINENT DIRECT ROLE.

4. FROM BRITISH VIEWPOINT, BYATT SAID, TALKS WERE SUCCESSFUL AND SATISFACTORY. AFRICANS REALIZE BRITISH UNABLE TO TAKE ANY PARTICULAR ACTION DURING ELECTION PERIOD, BUT WERE SATISFIED THAT DIALOGUE CONTINUING AND BOTH SIDES NOW HAVE BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF EACH OTHERS VIEWS AND POSITIONS.

5. COMMENT: BRITISH RESPONSE TO AFRICAN INITIATIVE ON DIALOGUE CAN CERTAINLY BE VIEWED AS POSITIVE STEP TOWARD DEVELOPMENT OF INTEGRATED REALISTIC POSITION ON SOUTHERN AFRICA PROBLEMS. NEITHER SIDE APPEARS TO HAVE EXPECTED MORE AT THIS TIME. TALKS CAN ALSO BE VIEWED AS AN ASTUTE ATTEMPT BY AFRICANS TO MAKE SURE THEIR POINT OF VIEW UNDERSTOOD BY LABOR PARTY AND BUREAUCRACY IN CRITICAL PRE-ELECTION PERIOD. END COMMENT.

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